

United States Senate

June 10, 2015

Ronald L. Davis
Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
United States Department of Justice
145 N Street, NE
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Director Davis:

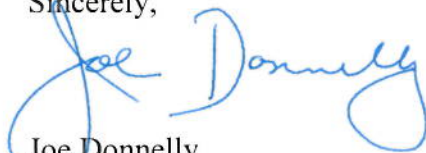
As Senator from the State of Indiana, I am concerned about the increase in drug-related crime in our communities. Scott County is located in southeastern Indiana, and has a population of approximately 23,972. It encompasses roughly 190 square miles and is home to many small, rural communities. Nearly 19% of Scott County residents live below the federal poverty level, and law enforcement is dealing with a serious and growing rate of both illegal and prescription drug abuse. This illicit activity has produced spikes in theft, burglary, armed robbery and prostitution, and most seriously, HIV transmission due to needle sharing. Scott County is now the site of the worst outbreak of HIV in Indiana's history. As of April, 2015, Scott County has documented 142 new cases of HIV.

In order to effectively combat this influx of drugs and the scourge it leaves in its wake, it is critically important that Scott County Sheriff's Department increase its staff. I fully support the Scott County Sheriff's Office request to add one more officer to its sworn force, and I encourage a favorable review of their COPS Hiring Program grant application.

An additional officer will enable the Scott County Sheriff's Department to increase its focus on reducing criminal drug activity. In addition to fully investigating leads from its tip line, surveillance of known drug hot spots and increased coordination with local police departments, the Sheriff's Department can increase its education efforts about available programs including needle exchange and addiction counseling, to the greater community.

I respectfully request that you give the Scott County Sheriff's COPS Hiring Program grant application full and fair consideration, in a manner consistent with U.S. law and public policy. I would appreciate being informed when a decision is announced. Announcements can be addressed to my Grants Director Marianne Black, at Marianne_Black@donnelly.senate.gov or by telephone at (317) 226.5555.

Sincerely,



Joe Donnelly
United States Senator